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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 000212

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [OSCE](#) [RS](#)
SUBJECT: OSCE CIO'S VISIT TO MOSCOW

REF: MOSCOW 198

Classified By: Political MC Alice G. Wells for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

Summary

1. (C) During the January 29 visit of Greek FM and OSCE Cio Bakoyannis to Moscow, Lavrov suggested Mevedev's proposed European Security Treaty (EST) be discussed at the Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC). He proposed that the ASRC be held at the minister-level, and in Athens, instead of Vienna. The MFA told us that Russia would also pursue a second, independent track on the EST outside of the OSCE. Lavrov reiterated the GoR's call for an OSCE charter and a conference of Central Election Commissioners. He contended that the security situation in Afghanistan did not permit OSCE programs to take place inside the country. Lavrov expressed support for Bakoyannis's proposal to establish a partnership for Palestine within the OSCE. Discussion of Georgia related-issues was reported reftel. End summary.

Initial Cio Visit to Moscow

2. (SBU) On January 28, MFA Deputy Director for the OSCE Alexei Polishuk briefed us on the recent visit of Greek Foreign Minister and OSCE Cio Dora Bakoyannis to Moscow on January 21. During her visit, she met with FM Lavrov in two sessions -- bilateral and OSCE-related -- with the bulk of the conversation on OSCE issues related to Georgia (reftel).

European Security Treaty

3. (C) Lavrov proposed that Medvedev's EST idea be discussed at the Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC), at the minister-level, and be held in Athens. At the meeting, Bakoyannis said she would consider the idea, but Polishuk expressed his disappointment that subsequently Bakoyannis announced that the ASRC would take place in Vienna but with no mention of ministers. Lavrov noted to Bakoyannis that Deputy Foreign Minister Grushko would travel to Vienna on February 19-20 to make a presentation on the proposal to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. Despite the heavy emphasis Polishuk and Russian MFA press releases placed on this issue in reporting on the Lavrov-Bakoyannis meeting, Greek Embassy Counselor Dmitry Iannou told us January 26 that Lavrov only touched briefly on this topic with little engagement by Bakoyannis.

4. (C) While admitting that there was little support for the European Security Treaty within the OSCE, as evidenced by the 2008 OSCE Ministerial, Polishuk told us that Russia would continue to pursue discussions. He said Russia would now seek dialogue in two tracks -- the OSCE track and a separate and independent track that aimed for an open summit. When asked if there was any umbrella under which these latter discussions would take place, he admitted "no...but perhaps we can create a group of friends to discuss the issues." Polishuk would not provide any details or speculate on

participants, timing, or location.

OSCE Reforms

15. (C) During the meeting, Lavrov proposed that the CIO review Russia's 2007 proposals on an OSCE Charter and a conference of Central Election Commissioners. Polishuk underlined to us that Russia had not changed its position: it wanted a legally binding charter as the "face" and "framework" of the organization. When asked if Russia would consider something other than a charter, he conceded that Russia could consider limited political agreements that would establish procedures for member-states and partners, but would not give up its pursuit of a formal charter. According to Iannou of the Greek Embassy, Bakoyannis told Lavrov that she was more interested in providing the OSCE with a "personality, not a charter."

New Threats and Challenges

16. (C) The MFA told us Lavrov said the security situation in Afghanistan did not permit OSCE programs to take place within the country. Polishuk also reported that Lavrov and Bakoyannis agreed that the OSCE should be doing more to stem the flow of synthetic drugs from Western Europe and could better use public-private partnerships in countering terrorism -- both Russian initiatives.

Middle-East Peace

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17. (C) Polishuk told us Bakoyannis's proposal to establish a partnership for Palestine with the OSCE took the GoR by surprise, but Lavrov told Bakoyannis that Russia would support the idea.

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